DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 194 240 RC 011 928

TITLE A Point of View. Education of Mexican-American Children.
PUB DATE 70
NOTE 20p.

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Administrator Attitudes; Bilingual Education; *Community Involvement; *Cultural Awareness; Cultural Education; *Educational Change; Educational Improvement; Elementary Secondary Education; Higher Education; Hispanic American Culture; *Mexican American Education; Mexican Americans; *School Community Relationship; Self Concept; *Self Esteem; Teacher Attitudes

ABSTRACT

Community invclvement, administrator and teacher education, student self esteem, and cultural awareness are four priorities for Mexican American education at all levels--from early childhccd programs through higher education opportunities. The community invclvement necessary for effective education requires sincere two-way communication; the recipients of an educational program must be involved in planning and executing the program and must feel it is relevant and important. Administrator and teacher education is essential for the successful instruction of Mexican American students; undesirable attitudes, perceptions, and judgments on the part of educators undermine programs which might otherwise be effective. The student's self image is a critical factor in school success; in crder for the Mexican American child to have a positive image of himself as a learner, educators must perceive the child as bringing assets to the classrocm, not liabilities. Cultural awareness includes educating the majority of society concerning Hispano-Mexican contributions to this nation's history and culture. Actions can be taken to provide meaningful education for Mexican American students, but effective educational change means revision of educational curriculum and objectives; piecemeal projects will not suffice. (JH)

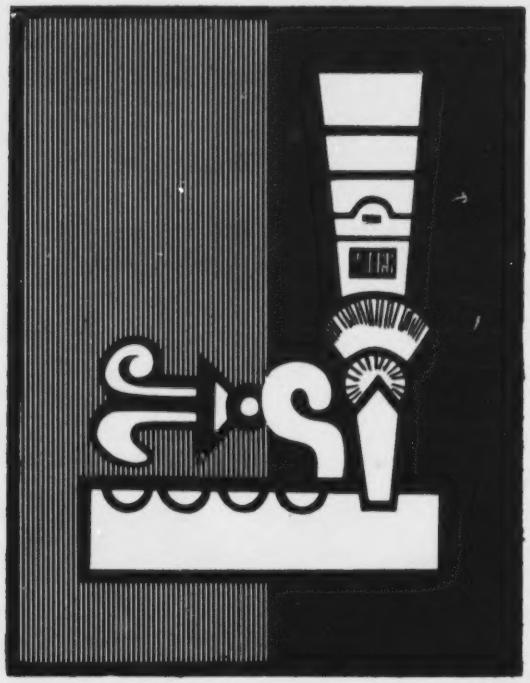
****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED194240

Richard Jones

[70]
16p

a point of view



4
MAR 1980
ERIC/CRESS
RECEIVED

EDUCATION OF MEXICAN-AMERICAN CHILDREN

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

R. Silva

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Association of Mexican-American Educators, Inc. ✓ file

RC 011928

EH 5703

The Association of Mexican-American Educators again re-affirms its goal of community development and involvement. Throughout the Point of View this goal is repeated.

Bilingual and bicultural education is a positive philosophical approach to education that develops the learner's assets by removing institutional, language and cultural barriers and restraints. It is a curriculum in depth that will fulfill the real needs of the Mexican-American child and the potential of all children. This philosophy is explicit in this document.

The topic of integration has been discussed by the membership this year. Yet the Association has not prepared a position paper. A theme in all discussions of integration or desegregation is the urgency for all schools, to make every effort to provide an integrated curriculum for all children. It is the intent of the Association to include a statement on this topic, as it relates to the Mexican American child, in the next edition.

Finally, the Association re-states its willingness to co-operate with all agencies and institutions in developing comprehensive educational programs for the barrios of the Southwest.

Mrs. Raquel Montenegro
President
Association of Mexican-American Educators
1969-1970

The Association of Mexican-American Educators continues to support the premise that relevant educational programs must involve, at all phases, those who are most affected by them. The Point of View remains our guideline for development of effective programs for all children, youth, and adults . . . particularly the poor and the culturally different.

The Point of View is dynamic and as the membership gains experience with programs on all levels of education, so the Point of View will reflect these successful perceptions.

The Bilingual Act provides school districts with additional opportunities. Our position is reflected in the statements in the final pages of this document.

The Association stands ready to serve in support of all children and youth. We will continue to stress the need for comprehensive educational programs that are committed to community development.

Dr. Ernest F. García
President
Association of Mexican-American Educators
1968-1969

FOREWORD

The Association is cognizant and appreciative of the efforts under Titles in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and the National Defense Education Act, plus the educational activities sponsored by the Office of Economic Opportunity. Local district projects prior to federal commitment are also recognized. Educational programs from pre-school to vocational training, from preparation of special materials to teacher training, from collecting of statistics to community development, all deserve support.

Yet, attention must focus on the child's needs. "Individualized instruction" must be more than an educational slogan. A process is required that will better identify his specific needs and his long-range needs, a process is required that will build on the assets of the Mexican-American child.

Innumerable programs have not succeeded because they have not measured the performance of the child in behavioral terms prior to his participation in a program; adjustments for accommodating successful children of a program have been few--no follow through; funds have been utilized for purposes other than direct services to the child; and community participation has been limited.

The series of proposed questions developed by the membership of the Association provides the school district with a procedure--an approach--that indicates a more effective means of improving the performance of children and the quality of education the Mexican-American child receives.

Succeeding pages of the Point of View will spell out those questions that can increase the success of educational efforts directed at Mexican-American youth. Moreover, a partial list is also included of projects, programs, and ideas which have been implemented in various districts. These actions have resulted in a high degree of engagement of the Mexican-American parent and child in the educational process and services of that school district.

Edward V. Moreno
President
Association of Mexican-American Educators
1967-1968

The Association of Mexican-American Educators is concerned with the education of all children, but specifically, the instruction of the Mexican-American child and adult from early childhood programs through higher educational opportunities.

As a result of conferences, workshops, seminars, and experiences in the education of bilingual and bicultural youngsters and adults, the Association membership found it imperative to outline guidelines and list actions that would indicate to laymen and educators alike that a sincere, meaningful, and lasting effort was being conducted by local school districts in engaging the Mexican-American child and adult.

Answers to these few simple questions give the general public a basis for understanding and assisting a school district in its efforts and intentions:

I. In an effective educational program, the recipients of the program must believe in it. This belief is generated by involving the recipients in the planning and execution of the program. An otherwise effective program, prepared by experts with positive intentions, may fail because the participants do not appreciate the necessity, relevance, or importance of it.

How are the children and their parents being involved in the decisions, policies, and implementation of their educational program?

II. Recipients of a program cannot be brought into it after major plans have been made. They must be involved from the beginning and must continue their involvement.

How <u>long</u> have the recipients been involved in the planning of their program?

III. An educational program must be related to recognized needs of the learners involved as they perceive their needs. That program must take into account the assets, attitudes, skills, and personalities of the learners for whom it is intended. It is necessary to specify in detail the characteristics of these learners and to define carefully the population of learners who are the targets of the program.

How relevant is the program to the target population?

IV. It is not enough to provide a program and have children receive it. It is necessary to select children for a program based upon evidence of their need and their possession of prerequisite attitudes and skills. Selection must be carried out by using instruments that unequivocally answer the question of needs and prerequisites.

What evaluative devices are being utilized to determine the selection of participants for the program?

V. An educational program is successful to the extent that its outcome is known. It is essential to state, unambiguously, what the participants are expected to be like after completing the program. This requires defining the behaviors the child is expected to exhibit after finishing the program.

What are the specific behavioral objectives of the program?

VI. There must be clear evidence that the procedures making up the program lead members of the target population to exhibit the desired behaviors after participating in the program. Definitive data that show that children in the program achieved the expected objectives are essential.

How has the program guaranteed successful attainment of its behavioral objectives?

VII. In some fashion, children must be evaluated after receiving the program to show that they have attained its objectives. Evaluation may involve available tests, specially-prepared tests, or specially-prepared observational instruments. The form is not as important as the validity of the evaluation.

What evaluative tools are being utilized to determine the successful performance of the children in the program?

VIII. Recipients of an educational program must be engaged in its planning and execution. In addition, they must participate in evaluating and re-evaluating the program to continue their meaningful contributions to the program's success.

How do the recipients convey to the school their reactions and evaluations of their program?

IX. Once an effective educational program is operating, it will have ramifications for other areas of instruction. The children will now have different needs and capabilities and these differences must be taken into account in future educational experiences.

What meaningful adjustments, changes, or improvements are being made in succeeding levels, grades, or classes to accommodate the successful children of the program?

X. Once an educational program has been demonstrated to be effective, it must be made a regular part of the actual school operation. The planning of the program must include provisions (personnel, resources, materials, financing, etc.) for an implementation phase and not just for the research/development phase. It has been assumed that an outstanding program would be implemented by the district. Seldom has an educational agency been capable of taking on the implementation of excellent programs.

How is the educational system incorporating the program as part of its regular services?

XI. Frequently, an effective educational program can be beneficial for children other than the target population. Attempts must be made to determine applicability of a program, starting with a critical review of the program to speculate on its potential for different types of participants.

Would the program be desirable for participants other than this target population? For whom? How?

A few high priority areas of concern for every level include:

1. Community involvement
2. Administrator and teacher education
3. Self-image improvement
4. Cultural awareness

Community involvement is directed at assisting the schools to initiate further meaningful and significant improvements in quality education of those it serves.

Community participation is stifled when (1) it is used to pacify community action, (2) it is used to sustain and promote existing conditions, or, (3) it thwarts or ignores the feedback from those it purports to serve. Community action should strive for sincere two-way interactions and resultant changes.

Administrator and teacher education is essential to implement existing and proposed programs. Undesirable attitudes, perceptions, judgments, and lack of information hinder the successful instruction of Mexican-American children in otherwise beneficial offerings. Apprenticeship training for administrators responsible for instruction in Mexican-American communities is imperative in order to follow through programs initiated by school districts.

The self-image of a child is a great factor in the success he will have in the educational system, in his relationship with others, and in his eventual full participation in a democratic society. Those in contact with the Mexican-American child must perceive him as bringing assets to the classroom and not liabilities in order that his self-image will grow.

Cultural awareness includes informing the majority society of the contributions and roles the Hispano-Mexican has played in the history of this nation and the future relationships this nation will have with Spanish-speaking countries. This awareness will make the Mexican-American child cognizant of his assets and heritage.

The succeeding pages include a partial list of meaningful actions. A series of abstracts elaborating those successful programs listed is being developed by the Association and will be available for further implementation by educational agencies. Each meaningful action must be part of a systematic longitudinal approach to individualizing instruction of Mexica -American children and adults.

Meaningful actions in early childhood programs will:

1. Employ professional, indigenous persons, part-time college Mexican-American students, and others from the community to serve as resource people for the classroom teacher.

2. Train non-professionals in attitudes and specific responsibilities prior to employment in the classroom.

3. Educate teachers and administrators in the areas of techniques and philosophy of early childhood education, the culture and history of the Hispano-Mexican, and include sensitivity training as part of this education.

4. Instruct in the language of the home at the onset where needed.

5. Seek funding from private sources in addition to local, state, and federal monies.

6. Develop teaching materials, such as games, pictures, songs, toys, music, art, movies, etc. which reflect the Mexican-American culture.

7. Design changes in the kindergartens, 1st, and 2nd grades to follow through programs prior to approving funding for early childhood projects.

8. Initiate new programs in the upper grades for the successful children of early childhood education.

9. Provide longer time allotments and flexible schedules, including extended day programs for mothers and children.

10. Include supportive services of social worker, speech therapist, nurse, dentist, etc. and others needed to strengthen the family structure and the family in the life of the community at large.

Meaningful actions in elementary programs will:

1. Form community advisory groups at each elementary school from a cross-section of the school's population.

2. Hire a community worker who will serve as liaison between the school and the community.

3. Foster emphasis on aural and oral language experiences.

4. Initiate preventive programs for new students arriving from out of state or Spanish-speaking countries to avoid extensive remedial programs later on.

5. Instruct in Spanish for children entering school for the first time if they would profit from Spanish instruction, and, provide a parallel E.S.L. Program.

6. Provide district in-service training of administrators and teachers stressing emphasis on language development, and teacher and administrator community experiences and services.

7. Involve community in planning of in-service programs, school policies, and other activities where the decisions of the schools affect them.

8. Include curriculum development for urban and rural Mexican-American conditions in teacher training institutions.

9. Encourage community resources from the indigenous population and from specific subject areas and research institutions to assist the schools in areas of language and reading development in the elementary grades.

10. Design report cards to include proficiency levels of skills and not letter grades for subjects.

11. Provide a learning continuum for children by having exchange teacher programs between elementary and junior high schools.

Meaningful actions in junior high school programs will:

1. Provide counseling in the field (streets, homes, churches, etc.) and not only in school environments.

2. Schedule group counseling sessions in small groups outside of school environment.

3. Encourage leadership training in school affairs and outside clubs.

4. Utilize community organizations and resources to complement teacher behavioral objectives.

5. Select successful Mexican-American businessmen, professionals, and community leaders for interaction sessions with students.

6. Assign in-service training for teachers of low achievers.

7. Involve parent participation in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of programs that affect their children.

8. Provide extra recognition in a variety of ways to teachers who visit homes, take classes, and otherwise become involved with the needs of their youngsters.

9. Support extra compensation for teachers assuming the comprehensive education of low-economic youngsters.

10. Set up in-service programs in the cultural life styles of Mexican-American students.

11. Initiate long-range evaluative instruments to measure specific goals and specific performance.

12. Supply extensive tutorial services.

13. Provide extended day study centers.

14. Distribute job information leading to job training programs for junior high school youngsters.

15. Include extensive outdoor living experiences.

16. Promote a regular teacher interaction program between elementary and secondary teachers to serve junior high youngsters.

17. Furnish an orientation program for children to develop a strong self-image.

18. Conduct research in providing effective means of helping pre-teens deal with their anxieties.

Meaningful actions in high school programs will:

1. Provide special low pupil ratio non-teaching counselors experienced in assisting bilingual and bicultural teenagers.
2. Initiate peer group counseling for high school students in the community, not in a school setting.
3. Hire school-community coordinators at every high school in Mexican-American communities.
4. Set up adult education classes geared to needs of teenagers and adults of the community.
5. Utilize only culture-free tests in selecting students for special programs.
6. Give compensation to teachers and administrators training to provide quality education to Mexican-American youngsters.
7. Initiate classes developing the contributions (past and contemporary) of Hispano-Mexican culture for all high school students.
8. Include soccer in regular Physical Education programs.
9. Extend work-study and other vocational programs into tangible employment opportunities.
10. Initiate bilingual programs for all teenagers as an elective.
11. Include classes in the history of the Southwest.
12. Schedule self-contained and ungraded classes in basic skill subject.
13. Provide high school offerings for students in late afternoon and evening classes.
14. Employ tutorial aides for basic skill subjects.
15. Utilize competent community persons as resource persons for the teacher in every subject area.
16. Initiate learning centers with peers, teacher aides, and professors available as instructors.
17. Insure ESL and foreign language courses are linguistically oriented.
18. Outline scholarships available to retain high school students in school.
19. Set up apprenticeship programs in vocational classes that lead to employment upon high school graduation.
20. Provide specific behavior objectives for each program and insure teacher and administrator accountability in its implementation.

Meaningful actions in higher education programs will:

1. Modify admissions policies.

2. Identify early those Mexican-American students with potential for recruitment into the university.

3. Reflect ethnic compositions of community in student college population.

4. Provide financial opportunities for encouragement of full time Mexican-American students.

5. Offer tutorial assistance in freshman and sophomore years.

6. Provide special counseling and orientation activities.

7. Appoint qualified Mexican-American educators to administrative positions.

8. Set up classes accurately treating the contributions of the Hispano-Mexican culture to Western Civilization.

9. Conduct research leading to implementation by existing organizations and agencies.

10. Assume leadership in pointing out to all students the professional opportunities for employment in Spanish-speaking countries.

11. Increase commitment and involvement in the issues and conditions of Mexican-American communities.

12. Increase communication and cooperation with community organizations through student and professor class projects.

13. Seek and encourage non-federal and state sources of funds for implementation of projects, proposals, programs, etc., to insure long-range objectives.

14. Establish in the Southwest a centralized depository and resource center for inter-American materials.

In summation, the public and all educators can readily assess the efforts, sincerity, and engagement of Mexican-American children by local, state, and federal educational agencies when the actions and ideas suggested at each level become regular school services. An implementation of any of the listed actions and ideas demands a revision of curriculum and objectives from the kindergarten through the university. Ad hoc programs and window-dressing projects and appointments will be perceived for what they are. It is intended and hoped, by the membership of this Association, that the actions listed will be beneficial and will improve the quality of education for all children.

The Point of View includes the perception that the schools of this nation, state departments, and federal agencies are having problems with the education of all those to whom they are responsible. Therefore, the membership of the Association, consisting of administrators and teachers at every level, state and local Board of Education members, and state and federal personnel, are anxious to assist in the planning, implementation and follow-through of programs concerning the instruction of Mexican-American children.

BILINGUAL EDUCATION . . . A Commitment to Community Development

Bilingualism is a world phenomenon, a relative concept. Bilingualism is multi-dimensioned. Each dimension is highly variable. Bilingualism is not a peculiar phenomenon of the Southwest, of California, or of any town in the United States. Bilingualism is not confined to any one ethnic group. Bilingual instruction is found in the cities and villages of Africa. There, small children are successfully learning English or French. Bilingual instruction in the primary grades of European schools enables children to learn German, Italian, English, French, and other languages. The Russians are teaching exotic tongues to their children. In Mexico, bilingual instruction is producing English-speaking children. A bilingual is one who is fluent in two languages. If bilingual instruction is commonplace throughout the world, then what is new, what is different, what is unique, and what does bilingual education mean to the communities of the Southwest?

Bilingual education is community development. Bilingual education is community investment. Bilingual education is investing in "los pueblos del suroeste."

What is emerging in bilingual educational programs?

One will see a class in a neighborhood garage, store, or wherever people gather. Both young and old are learning to improve the housing in the community. They are learning how to set up credit unions. They are learning how to improve street lighting. Classes in motorboat repair are conducted in Spanish with a guarantee of job placement. In this class, young adults are learning how to march on City Hall to demand changes in zoning practices that tear the "barrios" apart. Together, parents and their

children are learning about Hispano-Mexican culture and its contributions to Western civilization. In a warehouse down the street, famous artists from Mexico are teaching sculpturing, painting, and ceramics to the talented youngsters of the town. A local theater has been converted into a cultural enclave presenting dramas in Spanish directed, produced, and performed by local members of the community. The theater also houses classes in cinematography, radio announcing, and ballet. On Saturday nights the free concerts are presented here. On Sunday afternoons the band composed of persons from the community presents its concert in the park. Industry has set up training programs for "la raza" with instruction in English and Spanish. In the afternoons and on weekends, the equipment is used for projects in "la vecindad." High school students tutor youngsters learning English. English-speakers from other communities come to be tutored in Spanish and in return, they offer the "barrio" their talents. Sister school programs have Mexican-American students living with Anglo families and in turn their sons and daughters are living with Mexican-American families. In the elementary grades the "barrio" dads--a curb-and-gutter man, a meat packer, an owner of a motor rebuilding shop, a baker, an actor, a baseball player, and a neuro-surgeon are speaking to the pupils of the schools. Moreover, the school district has trained community instructional aides to teach Spanish in the schools of the city. University classes in Sociology, Education, and Anthropology conducted in the "barrios" are attended by many of the adults of the neighborhood along with students from the university. The most successful drop-out prevention program is directed by a local gang leader. The use of drugs among teenagers and adults has been reduced by a program designed by teenagers and ex-narcotic users. In the evenings Anglos crowd the cultural center to learn Spanish from members of "el pueblo." This is just a beginning of what one can see in bilingual educational programs.

Bilingual education is more than instruction in Spanish or in English.

Bilingual education means new roles, new perceptions, and new attitudes.

Bilingual education means recognizing that parents and students have a stake in the policies and the implementation of programs that are in the best interest of the community.

Bilingual education is not the panacea. It is a hope for the communities of the Southwest. If bilingual education grows into a commitment of community development:

No longer will you hear about the problems of the Spanish-speaking child.

No longer will you read long lists with the characteristics of the poor.

No longer will attention be focused on what is wrong with the "barrios."

The "barrios" are beautiful.

Bilingual education will make the "barrios" even more beautiful.